

A PROPOSED LAND USE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

ADOPTED BY THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS
APRIL 11, 1990

*Land use & Calif. & San Francisco metropolitan area
X Planning.*

Many citizens in the Bay Area have noticed that their quality of life is being jeopardized by haphazard regional growth patterns. People are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of problems such as:

- traffic congestion
- cost and supply of housing
- loss of open space and deterioration of the environment
- diminished air and water quality
- perception of economic decline

The real dilemma is not that these problems exist, but that they appear largely unresolvable by our present structure of independent local decision-making. Recent attempts at inter-jurisdictional land use cooperation and coordination have generally fallen short while problems have worsened.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The Regional Planning Committee of the Association of Bay Area Governments believes that local governments must find a way to balance local self-determination with effective subregional and regional policies and decision-making. The Committee also believes that it is far better to develop our own common vision and interjurisdictional approach to decision-making within the Bay Area than to have unilateral actions dictated by the State of California

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

While recognizing that there are numerous growth-related issues that could be addressed in any new approach, the Committee elected to develop a discrete set of policies aimed at the most critical land use issues confronting the Bay Area.

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

The Committee proposes the establishment of a policy framework for future land use decision-making in the Bay Area which respects the need for strong local control.

The framework advocates a **city-centered concept of urban development**, with balanced growth guided primarily into or around existing communities while preserving surrounding open space. The proposed system reduces public costs by encouraging a more efficient use of existing and future infrastructure.

Subregional decision-making is established to resolve interjurisdictional land use issues and to carry out regional objectives.

Finally, the policy framework addresses existing fiscal constraints and motivations influencing many existing land use decisions.

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POLICY ONE

Growth shall be encouraged where regional infrastructure capacity, such as freeway, transit, water, and solid waste capacity, is available or committed.

Actions

- A. Regional agencies shall advocate a priority in allocating Federal, State, and special district grants, loans and funds to support housing, industry retention and new job growth in those communities that are easily accessible to existing concentrations of unemployed or underemployed workers.
- B. Cities, counties and special districts shall discourage significant infrastructure extensions beyond urban growth boundaries.
- C. Cities and counties shall designate vacant or underused land with available infrastructure for higher intensity use in their general plans.

POLICY TWO

Encourage development patterns and policies that discourage long distance automobile commuting and increase resident access to employment, shopping and recreation by transit or non-auto means.

Actions

- A. Cities and counties shall designate office and industrial land (in excess of long-term need) for residential use where necessary to balance future employment and housing.
- B. Cities and counties shall encourage employment and housing in proximity to transit stations.
- C. Cities and counties shall ensure that non-transit accessible employment improves job/housing balance within the community or subregional area.
- D. All public agencies shall support telecommuting opportunities.
- E. Cities and counties shall encourage employment that provides jobs for local residents.
- F. Regional agencies shall advocate funding priority to transportation projects in communities with programs that reduce job/housing imbalances.

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POLICY THREE

Establish firm growth boundaries for the urban areas of the Bay Area. Urban development shall be encouraged and permitted only within these growth boundaries.

Actions

- A. Cities and counties shall develop long-range plans to accommodate population and employment growth projected by the regional agency. Assuming reasonable residential and employment densities, localities shall propose an urban growth boundary for inclusion in their general plan.
- B. Land that is located beyond urban growth boundaries will be protected for agricultural or rural use.
- C. Regional agencies will be ultimately responsible for final acceptance of locally proposed urban growth boundaries.
- D. Regional agencies will advocate restricting funds to jurisdictions who have plans inconsistent with this policy.

POLICY FOUR

Encourage the provision of housing opportunities for all income levels.

Actions

- A. Cities and counties shall make every effort to improve the supply and affordability of housing in their local plans and programs to accommodate both local and regional needs.
- B. City and county growth management plans and programs shall develop strategies and actions to meet local and regional housing needs.
- C. Regional agencies shall advocate funding priority within communities having effective housing policies and programs.
- D. Regional agencies will advocate restricting funds to jurisdictions who have plans inconsistent with this policy.

1. The first step in the process of identifying a problem is to define the problem.

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2. The second step is to identify the causes of the problem.

3. The third step is to identify the effects of the problem.

4. The fourth step is to identify the stakeholders involved in the problem.

5. The fifth step is to identify the resources available to solve the problem.

6. The sixth step is to identify the constraints on the solution.

7. The seventh step is to identify the potential solutions.

8. The eighth step is to evaluate the potential solutions.

9. The ninth step is to select the best solution.

10. The tenth step is to implement the solution.

11. The eleventh step is to monitor the solution.

12. The twelfth step is to evaluate the results of the solution.

13. The thirteenth step is to report the results of the solution.

14. The fourteenth step is to document the solution.

POLICY FIVE

Coordinate local land use plans with neighboring jurisdictions on a subregional basis.

Actions

- A. Cities, counties and special districts shall jointly develop subregional policies and review boards to resolve matters relating to job-housing balance, the amount and allowable density of needed housing, open space buffers, coordination of infrastructure, and capital needs and responsibilities.
- B. Once subregional policies have been adopted, they will be reflected in local general plans and relevant special district programs.
- C. Local jurisdictions shall participate in interagency tax sharing agreements on a subregional basis when appropriate to balance fiscal inequities caused by land use policies.
- D. The mitigation of significant adverse impacts of a plan or project on a neighboring community shall be required unless, on a subregional basis, mitigation is deemed infeasible due to overriding social or economic considerations.
- E. Cities and counties shall consider sharing and pooling of local housing funds on a subregional basis.
- F. Cities and counties shall, on a subregional basis, develop procedures for improved notification and communication on planning and development issues.

POLICY SIX

Allow for the development of new communities along transit corridors when they would not negatively impact existing communities.

Actions

- A. Counties could designate in their general plans, and regional agencies shall prioritize, areas appropriate for new community development.
- B. New communities shall provide residents with the ability to live, work and shop within their boundaries.
- C. All public agencies shall ensure that new communities include a full range of facilities, such as water, sewer, transportation, schools and recreation.

about 7.5% of the population of the
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for a country of this size.

It is estimated that the population of
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1917-1918

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ORGANIZATIONAL CONSOLIDATION AND COORDINATION

The Committee recognizes that many critical issues remain unresolved in this proposed framework. A key to directing and implementing this system is both horizontal and vertical consistency between the plans and policies of public agencies. No specific recommendations have yet been formed about the need to merge, add to, or abolish existing levels of authority. Finally, the Committee has not suggested the means of electing or appointing policy persons to manage this proposed new system, or on the details of authority at either the subregional or regional level.

RECOMMENDED STATE ACTIONS, INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS

Full achievement of this regional policy framework requires state action in a variety of areas. **It is crucial to recognize the need for additional revenue in conjunction with this or any new system. The impact of Proposition 13, costly mandated activities relating to county social, health and justice services, and the need for increased maintenance of existing infrastructure precludes full implementation of the proposed policy framework without new revenue.** The state should:

- A. Allow for the establishment of authority at the subregional and regional level to carry out adopted land use policies and actions.
- B. Require special districts, local agency formation commissions (LAFCO's), and regional agencies to coordinate their efforts.
- C. Either directly provide a new and stable source of funding, or enable regional comprehensive planning agencies to raise revenues to fund comprehensive planning and infrastructure programs.
- D. Reduce the 2/3 vote requirement for infrastructure bond issues.
- E. Improve flexibility in rules governing tax sharing arrangements between local jurisdictions.

F. Allow for the withholding of new revenue as well as grant funds to cities, counties and special districts that do not comply with adopted land use policies and actions.

G. Permit the imposition of a regional impact fee on developments which proceed contrary to the regional policy framework.

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